

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
TRIAL
OF
ALEXANDER KILHAM,
Methodist Preacher,
BEFORE THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE
IN
LONDON:

On the 26th. 27th. and 28th. July, 1796.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. GAL. 2. 11.

God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove my integrity from me. JOB 27. 5.

NOTTINGHAM:

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ADVERTISEMENT.

I am extremely sorry that I should be compelled to appeal again to the Methodist connexion and others, in defence of my character. But as this is a duty I owe to them and to myself, I cannot neglect it, without acting contrary to those principles of justice and uprightness, which I have constantly avowed.

It is the opinion of many of our most sensible friends, that a full confutation in writing of what I have published, would have been a thousand times more satisfactory to our people, than the steps which have been taken, to bring me into condemnation. Messrs. Benson, Mather, Pawson, and Cowther, published their sentiments in reply to the Newcastle address. If the ten Preachers who wrote the letter (which I call the London Methodistical bull; and which I answered in print soon after it was written,) to the Chairman of the Newcastle district, to have me immediately tried, had united their influence in answering the arguments and charges I have produced in my Progress of Liberty, the people would have been able to judge, of the merits of my cause.

After

After I had been tried three days in Newcastle, the charges drawn up against me, were of such a nature, that the Preachers did not think it prudent to suspend me from ministering the word on account of them. Out of respect to them, and to convince the connexion at large that I was not stubborn, I yielded to their intreaties, and forbore to publish my animadversions on their charges, for three months. But when I was called a second time to their bar and found them determined to pass no sentence, but to refer my case to the conference, I refused to be silent any longer.

The account which I have published of my trial at both the district meetings is before our people: and the greatest part of those who have perused my remarks, consider them an ample reply to every charge brought against me.

The little pamphlet called an appeal to the Alnwick Society, was occasioned by the steps which a few individuals took, both to injure my character, and to prevent my return to that circuit—And the “Short Remarks” which I published at Nottingham, in my way to the conference, were occasioned by a Pamphlet, signed in behalf of the district meeting, animadverting upon my statement of our allowance. The former of these is noticed in the trial, but the latter is not.

There are two things, which I beg the candid reader seriously to consider. 1. In all the pamphlets I have published this year, I have one object in view. That is, to show, that our people labour under an oppressive system of rules of discipline, which does not admit of their having any share in the government of the connexion, but by the good will of an assistant; and this is not of necessity in him, but of choice. This is the object of my attack throughout the whole. And where I have introduced the characters of different individuals, it has been with *no other* intention, than to place in a strong point of view, the necessity of a reform in our constitution. If this be kept in mind, every impartial reader will observe the *design* of my writing, and be able to form a proper judgment of the steps which I have taken in this matter. 2. It appears to me, that those Preachers who had the management of my trial, determined to keep my design out of sight, (which was a general reform) and to accuse me upon detached

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tached and trivial parts of my writing. They were conscious, if the end I aimed at was always kept in view, the charges brought against me would be of little or no importance: but if this could be hid, and little things magnified into crimes, my condemnation and expulsion might be obtained. This method was invariably pursued, which exactly answered the purposes intended. Perhaps three out of four of the Preachers did not perceive it, and therefore voted for my expulsion. I cannot for a moment imagine, that two thirds of the conference would have risen up against me, had they carefully distinguished between the two subjects I have just named. I attribute my fate to the influence of about a dozen Preachers, who probably had laid their plan before they met in London, and might ripen it on the memorable day, that their brethren spent in fasting and prayer, while they were drawing up a list of charges against me. As this small number engrossed almost all the conversation of the conference, and transacted all its affairs, I do not wonder, that they should draw many into their measures, by the art and eloquence they can make use of on such occasions. When the rest of the brethren have time to reflect, I am apprehensive, they will cheerfully own, that they had not properly considered the subject; and were they to be called upon a second time to sanction a measure of this nature, they would by no means help in it. These brethren, if I am not greatly mistaken, will be more ready, when better informed, to vote for my return, than they have been for my expulsion.

I shall conclude this Advertisement by observing, the reader must not forget, that I was called to the bar of the conference without the least knowledge of the charges they meant to prefer against me. And when they read, what *they called* charges, I was required to answer immediately, and could not obtain liberty to examine them alone, and prepare my defence. Without a single advocate I was obliged to give extemporary answers to any questions they were pleased to ask, or to be reproached for refusing. And it often happened, that five or six persons were speaking at once. Can it be supposed, that in a situation so *extremely trying*, that I should always be ready to defend myself to advantage? Can it be imagined, that I should never be confuted, in a meeting of this nature?

ture? Would it not have been a great miracle to have made the best of my cause in that state? And yet, most of the particulars that are found in this Pamphlet, were brought forward at the time of my trial. When they are properly considered, the reader will be able to judge, how far the conference had a right to declare, that I "was not able to substantiate a single charge."

I have only to add here, that I have been obliged to wait ten days for their account of the trial. On the day of my expulsion, I intreated them to give me a copy of the particulars, but they refused. I have sought for a copy repeatedly since, but was not allowed to obtain my request till it was publicly sold last night at the Book Room. Had I been favoured with it sooner, my answer, as well as theirs, would have been circulating through the nation at this time. Perhaps this delay, which I could not avoid, will be over-ruled for good. Because if I am not greatly mistaken, the passages they have quoted from my pamphlets, will in general carry such conviction to the minds of our leading friends, that they will perceive at once, the *nature* of my offence, and the *real cause* of my being so publicly expelled from the connexion.

A KILHAM.

LONDON, 9th. August, 1796.

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THE TRIAL, &c.

AFTER the President and Secretary were chosen, on the first day of the conference Mr. Mather, with the permission of the Preachers, asked me several questions; which, together with the answers I returned, will be inserted in a suitable place in this Pamphlet. On Tuesday morning, after I had given in a written answer to the questions proposed, the list of charges, which a committee of the Preachers had drawn up the day before, was read in the public conference. I particularly intreated the brethren to favour me with that list, but they refused, and only allowed me to take a copy of it, the last day I stood at their bar. On our return from breakfast, I again requested a copy of the charges they meant to prefer against me, with time to make my defence.—To have a trial by a Jury of respectable Friends.—And to have it public for the society in the New-Chapel, that they might judge of the merits of my cause. But all these requests were rejected by the conference, To shew that I had a right to such a trial, I read the following
on

emphatical words, written a few years ago, by *Dr. Coke*, on the state of *Dewsbury Preaching House*.

“Has not every man, when accused, a right to an *impartial* trial? And can that trial be *impartial* when the same persons are Accusers, Jury, Judges, and Executioners? Can any process be more absurd, more inconsistent with the essence of Justice, than this? And can it be supposed that it ever could enter into the mind of so wise a man as Mr. Wesley, to accede to a proposal so contrary to every idea of law and equity?—Let us, then, again resume the consideration of that important hinge, on which the argument chiefly turns.—Is it equitable, in this or any case of a judicial nature, that the same persons should be Accusers, Jury, Judges, and Executioners? For this is the very power which the Trustees require!! [And which the Preachers now plead for in my case, under the title of trial by our Peers]

“I have perused books on the laws of nations, on the civil and municipal laws of many countries, on the ecclesiastical laws of many churches, but never met with such an instance of bare-faced tyranny and injustice as this requisition implies, except in the histories of the Popish Inquisition. And can the God of Justice require submission to such a demand? Or has any man upon-earth a just authority to oblige any other man or number of men, to submit to such tyranny? Is it possible that there can be many in this tolerating, improved age, who, on a full view of the subject, will justify any attempt that can be made to establish such a law?”

On this passage I shall just remark. 1. The Dr. declares that every man has a right to an *impartial* trial, when accused. 2. That his Accusers ought by no means to compose the Jury, and be both his Judges and Executioners. 3. It is inconsistent with the essence of Justice. 4. It is contrary to every idea of law and equity. 5. It is absurd. 6. It is bare-faced tyranny and injustice. 7. No laws civil, municipal, or ecclesiastical require it; except the Popish Inquisition. 8. The God of Justice does not require submission to such a demand. 9. No man or number of men, has a right to oblige any person to submit to such tyranny. 10. The Dr. supposes,

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it could never enter into the heart of such a wise man as Mr. Wesley, to accede to a proposal so contrary to every idea of law and equity. 11. Lastly, there are but few in this tolerating age, that will justify any attempt to establish such a law. No sooner, however, had I finished reading this excellent passage, than the conference immediately became my Accusers, Jury, Judges, and in due time my Executioners. Tell it not in Gath! publish it not in Ashkelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines should rejoice!

The first thing that reflects on my conduct in their account, is found in the 4th page. The conference first stood to declare, "We engage to follow strictly the plan, which Mr. Wesley left us at his death." And as an explanation, they stood up again to testify that "they were unanimously determined to abide by the large minutes of the conference, in every thing which respects doctrine and discipline contained therein." And then one of the Brethren observed, "after these minutes were passed, that Mr. Kilham by standing up to them, as a sign of his assent, did thereby recant all his late publications." Mr. Kilham replied, "that he agreed to the preceding minute, as far as it was agreeable to the scriptures."

In regard to the first particular, after I had stood up, they allowed me to explain. In a Pamphlet I published last year, signed Paul and Silas, I have shown, that the plan Mr. Wesley left us at his death, required us to follow the opening of Providence. And I declared to the conference, by standing up then, it was to shew my willingness to follow a plan, that admitted of our treading in the footsteps of divine Providence.

Before we stood up a second time, one of the Preachers declared, it was not supposed that a man should agree to every thing in the minutes. And the only professed design of my standing up to them was, as I asserted, and as they have published: that I agreed to the minutes, as far as they are consistent with the scriptures. A great deal was said to persuade me to promise that I would conform to them, without putting in any conditions. When Mr. Benson pressed me to do it, I begged him to remember what he had published on this head. That is, that "No creeds, confessions of faith, or articles

articles of religion, are farther to be regarded than they can be proved by the scriptures, the *only* rule and the sufficient rule of both faith and practice. And with regard to *this*, every individual must examine and judge for himself; calling no man, let his abilities or integrity be what they may, *Master*, or *Father*, on earth, and crediting no man's doctrine farther than it is, in his judgment, proved from scripture; *in his judgment*, I say, for as every man must give an account of himself to God, so must every one judge for himself." Mr. Benson's answer to Dr. Tatham.

Mr. Benson seemed a good deal confused, while I referred to this passage. Yet he attempted to prove, that every Methodist Preacher ought to engage to submit to the minutes without any condition being expressed. While I was reminding Mr. Benson of his own words, Mr. Bradburn smiled and sat down. Perhaps he thought I should be quoting a few passages from his excellent Sermon on Equality. The subject was immediately changed, and other things occupied our attention.

They say "Mr. Kilham then observed, that he saw only *some little things* in the large minutes, which he did not approve of." I told the conference, in regard to preaching, prayer meetings, classes and bands, love-feasts &c. I only *"some little things which I did not approve of."* But when Mr. Thompson declared the word *discipline* included the whole economy of Methodism, as it referred to Leaders, Stewards, local Preachers, bringing out persons to travel &c. I told him and all the Preachers, that if every thing of this nature were implied in the expression, I saw many things which I could not be reconciled to; and begged they would insert in the trial, that I would only submit to the minutes, as far as I believed them to be consistent with the word of God. If the conference believe every thing contained in the large minutes to be agreeable to the scriptures, what is the reason that so many things which they require are neglected, and other things submitted to, that are contrary to their expressed meaning? The large minutes require "that no Preacher touch drums or snuff on any account." That they are not to give "tickers to any that wear calashes, high heads, or enormous bonnets." "That they are not to affect the gentleman."

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gentleman," nor "take any step towards marriage without consulting their brethren." "Chuse the plainest texts you can—take care not to ramble, but keep to your text, and make out what you take in hand.—Print nothing without my approbation.—Do you eat no flesh suppers? no late suppers? Do you drink water? How often do you drink wine and ale? Build no Preaching House where the ground will permit, but in the octagon form." These and a great number of prudential rules, appointed by Mr. Wesley from the best of motives, we ought to conform to, as far as the bible requires. But would it not have been exceedingly foolish, for me to have declared that I believe the scriptures require these things exactly as they are expressed? And was there any thing evil in my saying, I will conform to the minutes as far as they are agreeable to the word of God?

These preliminaries being settled, the conference came to their first charge. But they have modified it, since it went to the press. It did stand at the time of my trial thus "He charges the Preachers with want of abilities for the work they have undertaken." Since the sentence was passed, they now declare, "Mr. Kilham has advanced, that many of the local and travelling Preachers want abilities for the work, in which they are engaged." See Progress of Liberty, page the 30th. "Are there not many local, not to say travelling Preachers, who cannot explain to the satisfaction of any sensible christian, a number of doctrines, which are essential to our salvation." After Mr. Bradburn had read this passage, he solemnly declared, he did not know, (Is this declaration according to what he has formerly used on the same subject?) either a travelling or local Preacher, but what could explain our doctrines to the satisfaction of our people.

I would ask my readers, is this a charge against the Preachers at large, as men wanting in abilities for their work? And will any person declare, who knows our connexion, and is capable of judging, that there are no local nor travelling Preachers that cannot explain our doctrines to the satisfaction of our people? Will not thousands, on hearing the question, be ready to answer in the affirmative, from their own certain knowledge of some local and travelling Preachers? After

I heard Mr. Bradburn make use of such expressions, would mentioning names have availed any thing? Is there any quibble in my telling the conference it is a question, and intreating them to answer it? Would it not be considered as an insult to the good sense of our people, to answer, what is self evident to thousands of them? And is my proposing this question such a crime, that my expulsion can only atone for it?

In examining their second charge, I shall beg leave to quote some of the passages they refer to, with the words immediately connected with them. They say, "Mr. Kilham has charged the Preachers with being guilty of spiritual tyranny."

Progress of Liberty page 19. If they had quoted the whole paragraph, my sentiments would have been seen at once. These are my words. "Is it not amazingly strange, that any sect or party should refuse to give to their brethren, what the laws of our country so cheerfully allow? Is it not cruelty and persecution to restrict one another, in those things which are not essential to the salvation of the soul? Does not every man that would force his brother to submit to any modes of worship, against his own mind, act the part of a spiritual tyrant, and lord it over God's heritage?" [Their quotation begins here.] We detest the conduct of persecuting Neros, and all the bloody actions of the great whore of Babylon, and yet in our measure we tread in their steps. [Their quotation ends here; but it is added in the same paragraph] "If a man of any sect or party should force his creed of faith upon us, and constrain us to worship in his way, contrary to our own will, or prevent us from worshiping according to the convictions of our own mind, he is a Nero to us—a true son of the great whore of Babylon."

Bull, page 24. The following words were added to a very emphatical passage, upon the rights of our people, taken out of Mr. Pawson's Pamphlet. He says, "Brethren for God's sake open your eyes in time before it be for ever too late, and endeavour to see persons and things as they really are. The Trustees [Here I add, "and do not many of the Preachers also?"] want to bind you in chains of their own making. The Preachers wish to leave you at liberty, as you ever have been, to follow the open-

ings,

ings of divine providence, and on all occasions to take such measures as shall appear to you to be most for the glory of God." These are Mr. Pawson's own words.

In another part of that excellent pamphlet he says, "Remember, O ye Methodists! that the reign of Popery is past and gone; let it never be restored among you, under any shape or name. In the name of him that bought you with his blood, maintain the rights and liberties of your own consciences." Part of their charge in the 27th page of the bull, contains observations on this passage. They quote these words. "That the reign of popery is fully ended even among us, is a doubtful case with me. Is it not a species of popery to keep our people ignorant of a number of things which concern their happiness?" Here they stop—But the paragraph continues to ask, "Is there no popery in the evils I have represented in the pamphlet? Is there no popery in the famous bull, which our worthy friend signed, to have me arrested and cast out of connexion, for enlarging upon the plan he laid down? Is there no popery in the mode of trying criminals among us? Does not the inquisition arrest different persons, and try and execute them, without the knowledge, and against the consent of thousands of the people? The London bull claimed a right to have me brought before the bar of the district meeting, not one in a thousand of our people knowing any thing about it. My trial was to have been by the preachers alone, without the people being allowed to hear what passed, or speak a word on the occasion. They have power to accuse, to produce evidence from themselves alone, to try, cast, condemn, and suspend me till the conference. If this is not popery, what is? When once the reign of popery is fully ended with us, then the plan I have suggested, or one similar to it will be adopted. Remember then, O ye Methodists! that if the reign of Popery is really past and gone, it is returning to you under a different shape, and with a new name. In the name of him who bought you with his blood, maintain the rights and liberties of your own consciences, by refusing to admit it again into your connexion. Be upon your guard, and convince your brethren and the world, that

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you

"you are resolved to follow the doctrine of this good man,
"if you cannot follow his practices!"

I have given this passage as it stands in the Bull. Is it generous in the brethren, to choote a few detached expressions in a paragraph to suit their purpose, when they are convinced the whole of it, would make against them? I quote many passages at considerable length, because very few of our friends have the pamphlets they are taken from; and most of those who read this trial, will be unacquainted with the merits of my cause, unless this method be pursued.

The next passage they refer to is found in the 9th page of the Trial, which I published after the second district meeting.
"Is it possible to torture the words of this passage to imply,
"that I have cruelly represented the body of Methodist
"preachers to be spiritual tyrants, and sons of the great
"whore of Babylon? If in any thing we wish to force the
"consciences of our people, or with-hold any of their privileges from them, so far as this is our conduct, we in
"some measure imitate spiritual tyrants; and resemble in
"some respect, the sons of the great whore of Babylon."

Appeal to the Alnwick circuit, Page 2d. "No government under heaven, except *absolute monarchies*, or the
"*papal hierarchy*, is so despotic and oppressive as ours is.
"Can it be supposed that a system of this nature should
"never be abused to the reproach of our connexion? Does
"it not open a way for designing men to act tyrannically
"and dishonestly? Is it not calculated to create jealousies
"and distrust in our leading men?" They stop here. But the paragraph concludes with these words. "And if it be
"continued, will it not soon destroy itself? Is it not the
"duty of every sincere lover of Methodism to seek to have
"it removed, and a better established."

On this second charge, grounded on the places referred to in these quotations they observe, "Mr. Kilham refused
"to give us satisfaction. He said, he had given an answer
"in the written paper delivered into the conference, and
"read in the former meeting; and he observed, "if that
"does not satisfy, I have nothing more to say." The unanimous judgment of the conference. This allegation has
"not been proved, and Mr. Kilham is consequently culpable.

“ble. The conference then declared, that they had no power, but what the Spirit and love of God, and love of the people, have given and continued to them.”

In the fourth page we have these words. “The conference desired Mr. Kilham to withdraw, till he should give in his answer to the above questions. On the next morning he delivered in a written paper, which the conference judged to be no answer at all, but merely a repetition of what he had advanced before in his pamphlets.”—

It would have been generous in the conference to have published this paper, then their readers would have been able to judge, whether it was an “answer at all” or not. As I referred them to this paper to exculpate myself from their second charge, I shall insert it here, that every impartial inquirer after truth may determine, whether I am culpable on this head or not.

An answer to questions proposed by the conference, delivered to the preachers, on the 27th July, 1796.

Question. “Do you support the third paragraph, in the first page of that pamphlet [called An Appeal to the Methodist Societies in the Alnwick circuit,] which declares that “there are several parts of our plan, both unscriptural and “oppressive to the people.”

Answer. According to my judgment, after all that Messrs. Benson, Mather, Pawson, and Crowther have said, our people are “ruled without being consulted;” as it refers to “the choice of their own officers, the formation of “their own laws, and the distribution of their own collections.” What is mentioned in the second page of that pamphlet, according to my views of the subject, is fairly deducible from our present plan. 1. An assistant preacher “has power, with the help of a single leader, to receive or “exclude members to or from the society, without the knowledge or consent of the people. 2. He can *alone*, place “or displace leaders, stewards, or local preachers. 3. He “can of himself, without consulting any of the preachers “that are travelling with him, recommend persons, and get “them placed among the travelling preachers. 4. He can “make all the collections, such as yearly, King’s-wood “school, and preachers’ fund, without being obliged to give

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a single

‘ a single individual any account of what he has received, till
 ‘ he come to the conference. 5. The preachers in the con-
 ‘ ference make laws for the people without consulting them,
 ‘ and transact all the affairs of the connexion, without the
 ‘ people having a single voice or representative in the as-
 ‘ sembly. 6. All the collections are disbursed by the
 ‘ preachers alone, and the expenditure is only published in
 ‘ gross sums, which prevents the people from knowing how
 ‘ the money is applied. This is the case with them all,
 ‘ except the preachers’ fund collection.’

“ After examining the subject on every side, I am
 obliged to own, that whatever respect is paid to general
 custom, our *present plan of discipline*, admits of every
 thing I have named. Those passages of scripture which in-
 form us that christians are brethren—that ministers are not
 lords over God’s heritage, but ensamples to the flock—that
 they are the servants of the people for Christ’s sake—accord-
 ing to my judgment, militate against our present plan.
 And, it is my opinion, our Lord’s words “ Do unto others,
 as ye would that they should do unto you,” are against our
 present mode of government. Acts vi. 1—6. and the xv.
 22, 23. and the xvi. 2. with 1 Tim. iii. 10, according to
 the commentaries of Messrs. Poole, Henry, Doddridge,
 Wesley, &c. “ clearly prove, that the primitive christians
 were virtually consulted in these things; and that ministers
 in all ages ought to consult their people in them.” Where
 preachers avail themselves of the liberty our plan admits of,
 and appoint leaders, stewards, local preachers, &c. to their
 office, without consulting either the people at large, or the
 present leaders and stewards, I think their conduct is un-
 scriptural: and as our system of rules does not bind a
 preacher to consult the people, whatever may be said re-
 specting general custom, I consider it in these things, as not
 founded on the scriptures.

“ It appears to me to be oppressive to the society. Is it
 not oppressive to any body of people to have members re-
 ceived to, or excluded from them, without their knowledge
 or consent? And may not this be done among us by a
 single preacher, in conjunction with a leader? If general
 custom were converted into positive law, this, perhaps,
 would

would not be the case. 2. Is it not oppressive to have leaders, stewards, and local preachers, appointed to their office by the [travelling] preachers alone, should they avail themselves the liberty our plan allows? General custom will admit of this. 3. Is it not oppressive to have preachers appointed to travel, without their knowledge or consent? Was not this done last year in several instances? Does not general custom admit of it? 4. Have not the conference power to form and execute what laws they please for the people, without consulting them; and is not this oppressive? 5. Have not the preachers power to receive and disburse collections of themselves, and is there no oppression in this? When any persons are told; if they do not approve of a discipline that admits of such things, they may leave us; is there nothing oppressive in the idea of either leaving the people they sincerely love, or of submitting to several things which are grievous to them, according to their present views of our economy?"

Question. "Do you intend to support the 2d paragraph of the 2d page of that pamphlet "declaring that no government under heaven, except *absolute monarchies*, or the *papal hierarchy*, are so despotic and oppressive as our's is."

Answer. "These words are connected with the six particulars I have quoted above: and they refer entirely to our plan of discipline. I do not mean by these expressions, 1. That the Methodist preachers are like the rulers of absolute monarchies and the papal hierarchy, as it refers to their life and conversation. 2. Nor that they have intentions to enslave and oppress their followers, as those governments do. 3. Nor do I mean, that, had they equal civil power with them, that they would use it in the same way.

"If I understand absolute monarchies and the papal hierarchy, our government bears some resemblance to them, in the following particulars. 1. The rulers in them have power to make laws, for themselves or the people, without their knowledge or consent. 2. They can abrogate, alter, or suspend laws at their pleasure, without consulting the people. 3. They can create new offices and places of themselves. 4. If they consult with their people, they have

power to act independently of them. 5. They can prevent the people by their representatives, from having any access to their councils, or grand assemblies. 6. They can levy taxes and expend the money, without being accountable to any for their conduct. 7. They can prevent free inquiry, and keep the people ignorant of many things, which are of great importance to them. 8. They can arraign, accuse, try, cast, condemn, as well as execute any of their brethren in office, without the interference of the people. 9. They can force the inhabitants to submit to their rules, or leave the country, and seek refuge in other nations."

"Now I ask, do we not, *in some measure*, resemble them in these particulars? Cannot we make laws for ourselves and our followers, without their having a single representative in our conferences? Cannot we abrogate, alter, or suspend our laws, at our pleasure, without consulting the different societies? Cannot we elect and appoint new officers in our connexion? And, were we disposed to do it, could we not make new places for new orders of officers? If we consult with our people, have we not a power to act independently of them, in a number of things? Cannot we prevent the leaders, or any representatives of the people, from having access to our district meetings, and to the conference? Cannot we appoint collections and disburse the money, without consulting our followers, or giving them an account in detail, of what we receive and distribute? Cannot we, in a great measure, prevent free inquiry, and in consequence of this, keep our people ignorant of many things, which concern their welfare? Have we not power to arraign, accuse, try, cast, condemn, and execute judgment upon each other, without the interference of the societies? Cannot we compel the people to submit to laws that are made by us alone every year, or force them to leave the connexion?—Viewing our plan of discipline, as bearing some resemblance to these oppressive governments, in this light, I was led to conclude the paragraph alluded to by asking, 'can it be supposed that a system of this nature, 'would never be abused to the reproach of our connexion? 'Does it not open a way for men to act tyrannically and 'dishonestly? Is it not calculated to create jealousies and distrust

' distrust in our leading men? And if it be continued, will
' it not soon destroy itself? Is it not the duty of every sin-
' cere lover of Methodism to seek to have it removed, and
' a better established?

Question. "Do you intend to support the second para-
graph in the third page of that pamphlet, which declares,
"that *priestcraft* is the same in every sect and party. It
"loves to deal with *ignorance and credulity*. It *abhors*
"*the light*, and ever strives to keep its votaries from *free*
"*enquiry*? And do you mean to support this as our
"character, according to the implication of that para-
"graph?"

Answer. "The words this question refers to are a
general maxim, which I never thought of applying to the
conference as it now stands. All I mean by it is this. If
we as a body of preachers conform to maxims of this na-
ture in *any respect*, so far as we act in conformity to them,
to far we are under the influence of principles that cannot be
justified. After this declaration I would only ask, have not
several preachers suppressed different letters which have been
circulated, directed to the leaders and stewards of several so-
cieties, since the death of Mr. Wesley? Has not a free
circulation of my pamphlets, the Newcastle address, &c.,
been prevented, among our people? Have not other pieces
in opposition to them been sold publicly in many circuits?
Have not a variety of means been used to prevent our so-
cieties from becoming acquainted with the subjects which
now agitate us? If these things have been manifest in any
part of our body, has not something of *priestcraft* been
connected with them?"—This is the paper I presented to
the conference in answer to their questions. And I now
ask the candid and impartial, is there no spiritual tyranny
among the methodists? Am I culpable for placing this sub-
ject in a proper view before the preachers? If what I have
said, to prove our want of a reformation on this head
"does not satisfy" every reasonable mind, is it likely that
I can advance any thing farther to do it? Is my offence so
great on this second charge, that nothing short of expul-
sion, can satisfy the connexion at large, on my ac-
count?

Before

Before I dismiss this subject let me ask, Does "the Spirit and love of God" give the preachers all the power I have shown they possess? Has the love of the people given them this power? And is it evident that the Spirit and love of God, as well as the love of the people, continue them in possession of it? If this be an indisputable fact, then it would be sinful to seek to regain the rights of the people. But if this be only a declaration made use of by the conference, for purposes best known to themselves, ought we not carefully to examine its import, before we adopt it?

3 Charge. "Mr. Kilham, has charged the preachers with immorality in the following particulars."

1st Article. "That the preachers have imposed upon the people in bringing out improper persons from selfish motives."

In the Progress of Liberty I have shown, that our present mode of bringing out persons to travel, admits of many evils. And, that while the people are not allowed to have a voice in this matter, very improper persons may be brought out every year. Upon our present system, I supposed the following case.

"I, as an *assistant* may wish to have the honour of sending many labourers into the vineyard of Christ, and therefore, thrust out, *against the minds of the people*, such men as are unfit for the work, to gratify my vanity. Or, I may like to *lunge at home* with my family, when I ought to go to *disagreeable, or distant places*; and appoint a local preacher to supply for me. He does it cheerfully, hoping one good turn will make way for another. When he has hacked about for me throughout the year, as a *reward for his services*, I get him a place among the travelling preachers, *without stooping to ask at a quarterly meeting*, whether he will be suitable or not. Or, I may see a man that has not attended well to his business, and is on the borders of being a bankrupt, and not know what to turn his hand to. His pitiful stories may work on my passions, and without consulting with the people in the circuit where I labour, I

"may

"may get him accepted, both at the district meeting and
"at the conference."

This case is supposed in strong terms, but every person acquainted with our affairs is conscious, that our system as it stood at the time of my writing that paragraph, admitted of an assistant preacher acting according to the letter of this passage.

After supposing the above case in the pamphlet, I ask, "Have not these methods been pursued to bring out preachers, even since the death of Mr. Wesley? And has not the conference been deceived by some of its members, and accepted men to labour with us, that are to this day a *dead weight* to the connexion? A very great majority of the preachers abhor such a conduct, and are distressed when they hear of it."

At the time of my trial, I mentioned a number of persons that had been brought out to travel with us since the death of Mr. Wesley, without the knowledge or consent of the people. I offered, if they would suffer the minutes to be examined of the four last years, to produce a great number of names from them, to confirm what I had asserted. But they refused to enter into an examination of the minutes on this head. Is there a leader or quarterly meeting in any particular circuit in the nation, that could not come forward and prove to the world what I have named? And are they not conscious that improper persons have been brought out to travel against the minds of the people? If the conference call this evasive reasoning, will our societies agree with them in such a declaration? And if they suppose me culpable, because I have shown to our friends what our system *allows*, will the different societies join in my condemnation, or consider me their friend? If I made use of very strong expressions in my account of the trial at the district meeting, it was with a design to engage the preachers and the people, to unite in establishing a plan by *positive laws*, that will not admit of any individual, bringing out improper persons to travel with us. And I have been informed, that the conference are resolved to accept of no person to travel in future, but such as have been well recommended in quarterly and district meetings. If they have passed sentence against

against me for what I have said on that head, I am happy to find, that they are disposed to adopt the rule we plead for. If this appear inconsistent, it is not my place to attempt to reconcile their condemning and expelling me one day, and the next adopting the very plan I had recommended.

2. Article. They say I have charged the preachers with having "only mock examinations of their characters." They refer to the first sentence in the paragraph, of the 38 page, of the Progress of Liberty. "Our present mode of examining each others characters, only makes sensible people laugh at us." Here they stop. But it is added in the same passage. "In a place remote from the circuits where we have laboured, when none are present but ourselves, it is *gravely asked*, "Has any person any thing against brother K—?" We cannot be supposed "to accuse each other, unless it be for something very immoral. Besides the question is a very superficial examination: it does not include what ought to be considered in calling over our names. Ought we not to ask, is brother K. pious in his conversation, and moral in his whole conduct? Has he gifts that render him acceptable and useful? Are there any souls awakened and converted under his ministry? Does he preach instant in season and out of season, delivering his discourses in such a manner, as to convince the people that he is in earnest? Does he regularly meet the societies after preaching, and endeavour to follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord? Does he visit the poor as well as the rich, and seek in private to save souls? Does he attend carefully on the sick, visiting and relieving, according to the nature of his office? Does he rise early, and either preach to the people, or pursue his studies? Or does he lounge away his mornings in bed, and spend a great part of the day in idleness? Is he an eternal smoker, or does he abstain from every thing that would render his company disagreeable? &c."—Is there any thing in this passage contrary to the gospel of Christ, or against the interests of our people? Would not such a mode

mode of examination as is here recommended, be highly advantageous to the connexion?

To place the subject in a proper light I shall just observe,
 1. We have no rules that require the characters of preachers to be examined in quarterly or district meetings. 2. If this is attended to, it is of choice, not of necessity. 3. In many circuits no examination takes place in quarterly meetings. And in several district meetings the case has been the same. 4. In every conference, there are many preachers present, that have travelled in circuits, 60 or 100 miles asunder, and cannot be able to judge upon each others conduct. 5. Notwithstanding the people have no voice or representative in the conference, yet it is asked, "has any person any thing against brother K—?" Can the preachers be proper persons to bear testimony of their brethren's conduct, when they have not seen each other since the last conference? Is there no cause for the people to divert themselves at our mode of examining each other? And had I not sufficient reasons for declaring, "that all the examinations taken in the conference without the people's having a single voice by themselves or their representatives, were mock examinations?"

I was ready to prove to the conference, what they quoted from my former trial page 12. and 13. but they did not require it. These are my words. "In different circuits where I have been, many of our friends have considered this examination in no other light than a *solemn farce*. I could name a circuit or two last year, where the preachers had been at variance for several months before the conference. They mutually accused each other of different things, which were contrary to their happiness, and usefulness in the vineyard of Christ. But when their names were called over in the conference, they had *nothing against each other*, though no reconciliation had taken place previous to their meeting in Manchester." How could the preachers publish, that I "refused to enter into any proof of this allegation," when I was ready to give them the names of these preachers and the circuits where they had travelled?

Is not the following, a curious declaration? "The conference have not only at all times received the written and verbal testimony of our people concerning the preachers, but have called upon them to bear their testimony in every question of this kind." If they have received the "written testimony of the people," have they always attended to it? Were not "testimonies of the people" respecting several preachers, destroyed without examination, in the two first conferences after Mr. Wesley's death? Where are the people called upon to bear testimony to the questions proposed, respecting the preacher's characters? In the conference, where their names are called over, the people are not present, and therefore cannot bear a verbal testimony for or against any preacher.

3 Article. I am charged with having accused "the preachers" with wasting the public money. They quoted passages from the 41, 48, and 54 pages of the Progress of Liberty. And from the 42 page of the Trial, upon this article.

This charge, I grounded upon the following words, quoted from the 13 page of my trial. "I will state a few cases, and then apply them: and this shall be confined to the last conference. 1. A great number of preachers were present, that had no business to transact: who had no right to be there by the rules of former conferences. 2. Several preachers left good horses in their circuits and went by the coach, that might have travelled at one fourth of the expence, had they gone on horseback. 3. Many rode in the inside of coaches, who might have travelled for half the expence on the outside. 4. Long removes of families. Only compare the minutes of the two last years, and you will find many long removes. Several large families removed to a great distance—Some one, some two, some three, and some four hundred miles."—The three first of these charges they passed over in silence. They never called upon me to speak a word upon any of them. They were too self-evident to require examination. Our people know them to be facts, which cannot be controverted.

Long

Long removes of families, was the only subject that they considered. I admitted that several long removes might be necessary, in case of sickness, and to supply particular circuits with suitable preachers in critical cases. But I asked what necessity there was of Messrs. Pawson and Clark removing from Liverpool to London the year before? Of Mr. Warrick removing from London by land to Dundee? Mr. Stephenson from Lancaster to Aberdeen? Mr. Candy and a large family from Lancaster to Newcastle-upon-Tyne? For Mr. Gaulter, with a wife and three children, from Alnwick to Rochdale? The latter assigned as a reason for his long remove, he had a mother above seventy years old, that he wished to be nearer to. Can any person doubt of many of the removes I have mentioned being unnecessary? And will not our leaders and stewards acknowledge, that there is a great deal of money wasted every year, in the things I have named? Had the conference, after considering the instances I produced, a right to declare, "that there was no more expence in them than was unavoidable?" Will the people join them in their judgment, that I was "highly criminal" for declaring, that a deal of public money had been wasted every year in our connexion, by the four things mentioned above? Is not the charge of wasting public money proved to a demonstration, by the particulars alluded to? Are the preachers justifiable then, in saying I could not make good one charge, and for expelling me from their body on that account?

4. Articles. I am charged with saying, "That the preachers have been guilty of swindling." They quote passages from the 43, 44, and 45 pages of the Progress of liberty. And from the 15, 16, and 17 pages of the Trial, to prove this charge. I told the preachers, that our plan was of such a nature, that every assistant had power to conceal from the people what he received in the collections that are carried into the conference, and might be dishonest if he pleased, without any person, having power to detect him: and that until we have a better plan established, our friends cannot be satisfied. The conference are mistaken when they publish, that on the charge of swindling "I only meant want of economy." I said, the want of a better plan

plan of economy laid the foundation, and opened a way for designing persons to act contrary to the gospel. I still maintain, what I published in my former trial. "Honesty never shrinks from responsibility. In many circuits where I have travelled, I heard the people declare, they had their fears respecting some of our brethren with regard to their honesty. And as they had an opportunity of concealing their affairs from the notice of leaders and stewards, this led them to imagine, that they would not be exact in some cases."

I asserted, that on our present plan, several persons had acted out of character. And that their conduct, if known to the leaders and stewards, would be considered by them as down-right swindling. I shall state here, what I brought forward in the conference, and leave the reader to judge, how far the preachers had a right to publish, that I could not "substantiate a single charge."

I am sorry that the conference should in any respect, attempt to justify the character of Mr. R—. Upon this subject I shall call the readers attention to the following particulars. 1. Mr. R. came out at first to travel, against the minds of a vast number of the people in the neighbourhood where he lived. 2. He had not travelled long before the daughter of one of our preachers was with child by him. 3. He was put out of connexion on that account. 4. He had not been expelled more than one or two years, before he was brought back to travel, against the remonstrance of very many of the leading preachers. 5. There were many complaints brought against him long before he was suspended a second time. Yet by the influence of a few preachers he was continued. 6. He was particularly charged with extorting unreasonable sums of money from the people, for pills, and other medicines. 7. Yet he sank into debt, not by any particular afflictive providence, but rather through want of economy. 8. If he had been in debt by family afflictions, it was the duty of the conference two years ago, to have made him suitable allowance. But, by what I can learn, no particular application was made to the preachers, for any extra allowance. 9. He actually received money from the circuit to remove him; and afterwards three guineas

from the conference for the same purpose, but never returned either of the sums.—The conference could not deny this part of the charge. 10. He sold his horse in Newcastle, without assigning to the friends there, that family afflictions induced him to do it.—On the contrary, one of my warmest antagonists declared, that he borrowed money to buy the horse sometime before, and the person that lent it, would not let him pass through Newcastle without having it returned. 11. Two respectable Preachers in the Newcastle district-meeting, gave us the account I published in my former trial, in as strong words as I have made use of.—And if I mistook in a trivial circumstance, it was by their information.—12. If he did not demand a horse, he knew the circuit so well, that he must be conscious he could not do without one. 13. After his case had been considered in the Manchester conference, and a number of Preachers pleaded for his expulsion, he was continued, and his name put down for many circuits, before he was fixed for Barnardcastle. 14. When the people in that place, who knew his character, heard of his appointment, they sent a letter to the conference, declaring they would not receive him.—The letter reached Manchester when many of us had left the conference, and it was *then* that he was suspended. The people of Barnardcastle in effect suspended him. 15. I did not know but he was sent to that place by the conference, and rejected by the people, till after I had published that account. And my knowing he was suspended by the influence of that society, did not alter the case in favour of the conference. 16. The person that wrote me the letter which the Preachers have published, is an avowed opposer of the measures I have taken: and every person capable of judging will be able to discern, how far this might influence him in writing. 17. I answered his letter by return of post, gave him up my authors of the account, and he appeared satisfied, as several friends in Ripon can testify. The conference ought to have published my answer with his letter, if they had been desirous of stating the subject in a proper light before our people. If these things are put together, I think no man will be bold enough to declare that there is nothing of swindling in this matter. If the circumstance of the horse be kept out of sight, receiving money

from the conference, as well as from the circuit, for *the same thing*, and not returning either of the sums, is sufficient to substantiate my charge.

They say, "Mr. Kilham was now called upon for another instance: and he mentioned the conduct of a respected brother, now in connexion, concerning a horse. The conduct of this brother, on this business, was minutely examined, and he was acquitted most honorably."

I will state this case as I gave it into the conference, and leave the people to judge how far he was "most honorably acquitted." He sold a horse and a saddle for about 11l. 13s. 0d. just after the conference in 1791. After the conference in 1792, he gave for a mare, with a saddle and bridle, 15l. 10s. 0d. But he constrained the circuit stewards to advance the extra money, 3l. 17s. and of course the mare &c. only cost him 11l. 13s. In the next circuit where he travelled, after hard riding the mare was so lame, that he determined to sell her, without waiting a sufficient time, to see if rest would recover her. [The mare was recovered in a few weeks after she was sold to such a degree of strength, as to be capable of performing the journeys of the circuit. The friend who bought her, when he found she was with foal, would not part with her for twice the money he gave for her.] She was accordingly sold for 7l. At the next quarterly meeting, he invited his friends from various parts of the circuit, and had a collection made on the occasion, to indemnify himself. He told them he had given 14l. for the mare, which induced them to subscribe 7l. 7s. to refund him. He also received 1l. 1s. for the same purpose from two friends. These sums added to what he sold the mare for, make 15l. 8s; from which if we take 11l. 13s. the original sum, there remains a balance of 3l. 15s. in Mr. ———'s hands; which he got by an unfair representation of his case. I maintained in the conference, that this brother ought either to have told his friends of the 3l. 17s. which he received from the stewards of the other circuit, or else to have sent it to those stewards again; and that his concealing it, was considered by many friends, as a species of swindling.

Now I appeal to the candid and impartial, whether or not the conference had a right to say that this brother was "most honorably

honorably acquitted," when they were positively informed, himself being present, that he had concealed the circumstances of his having received the above mentioned sum, and by that means caused his friends to believe he was a loser of 7l. when in reality he had only lost 3l. 15s.

They say, "Mr. Kilham was then called upon for a third instance, and he mentioned a person who had been five years ago tried before the conference, and being judged censurable, was put back on trial."

As they have not invalidated this charge, but owned it, in saying "he was censured and put back on trial," does not this prove even in the opinion of the conference, that I have substantiated one charge?

They say "Further instances were then demanded of Mr. Kilham; but he refused to bring any more charges, unless the conference would indemnify him in respect of the consequences."

So far from this being the case, I desired them to read the charge which I have published in the 17th page of my former trial. One of them read it immediately. These are my words. "The cry of leaving the connexion is made by several preachers, provided I am continued, or the alterations are brought about which we plead for. One of my brethren most fervent in these cries, travelled a few years ago at ——— in ———. He intreated the stewards &c. there to buy him a horse, to supply a few places they had to walk to in the neighbourhood. At length they complied with his request. He did not however keep the horse many months before he would sell him. And instead of returning the money to the stewards, he went off with it!!! When this account was read, several persons desired the name of the preacher that had been guilty of such conduct. I told the conference Mr. Mat. Lumb, who was then present, gave me the particulars, and he would tell them the Preacher's name. But as they determined not to have the name from him, I resolved not to give it up, unless they would indemnify me against the consequences."

Perhaps some of my readers may think it strange that I should wish to be indemnified against the consequences that might follow. It arose from this circumstance. I received

two notes in the time of the trial from two of the Preachers, informing me that I was threatened with the spiritual court, if any thing was said that could be laid hold of. They therefore begged I would not give up any names without indemnification. I told the conference the cause—and they have published that “he refused to bring any more charges, unless they would indemnify me in respect to all consequences.”

Now I appeal to every *unprejudiced reader*, if the accounts given above, do not prove beyond a doubt, that these men, whatever the conference may say to the contrary, taking advantage of our imperfect system, have been guilty of a species of swindling. How could the conference then publish, that I would not “substantiate one charge,” when each of these accounts was brought before them? and when they confessed I would have brought other charges, if they would only have indemnified me against the consequences? will the people declare I have brought “charges without proof,” and therefore am “highly criminal?” or will they acknowledge, that the proofs I advanced were of such a nature, that none could possibly resist their evidence, unless they were determined to shut their eyes against the light?—I told the conference, that if they supposed these facts were no proof of the 4th. article of their charge, when they were published, our people would be of a different judgment.

Under this article, I am also charged with unfairly and unjustly obtaining a letter, intimating some fears, respecting some of the public money.” This letter was written by Mr. Rodda to Mr. Mather. The latter lost it out of his pocket in the Vestry room in Salford Chapel. When one of my friends first looked into it, and saw the importance of the matter it contained, he thought it necessary to send the letter to me, that its contents might be considered, and brought forward in my defence. When Mr. Mather had informed the conference of the particulars respecting the loss of the letter, I offered to give it up to the President without reading it: but a great majority of the Preachers would have it read. The next day Mr. Mather requested the copy of that letter (I had given him the original a few days before) which I had then in my possession. I gave it up freely, not sup-

posing

posing they would bring forward any account of it in what they should publish of the trial. Especially, as they had expunged this from the list of charges brought against me at the time of my expulsion.

The latter contained the following particulars. Mr. Rodda was severe upon me in the first page, and quoted the words of Job on the occasion. "But now those that are younger than I have me in derision—whose fathers I would have scorned to have set with the dogs of my flock." 2. He told Mr. Mather, several of the Preachers that signed the London bull have been deeply impressed for some time, with many fears lest they should soon have to take their farewell of Primitive Methodism. 3. He then asked him in words to this effect. "What would a K—— [that is a Kilham] say if he knew that Dr. C—— and H. M—— took eighteen guineas at a time out of the book money, against the consent of the book-committee, when they had been re-monstrated with by Mr. Creighton, Mr. Bradford, and myself, at the time I was a member of that committee? Or of J. Rogers secreting the deed of the goods of the house in London, from the Gentlemen whose names were at it? Or of the late peculation in the Kingswood money?" 4. He says, if Mr. Mather had been at the helm. [that is, if he had filled Mr. Wesley's place] he would not have suffered such things to have passed unnoticed. 5. At the Manchester conference Mr. Mather was greatly displeased, when he heard of the paper signed by 57 Preachers; requesting that all our laws might be made so explicit that none of them might be capable of a double meaning. Mr. M—— rose up declaring he would leave the connexion. In this letter, Mr. Rodda observes, "The day you stood upon your feet in the conference, and did not use them, in the *quick or slow* march, you might say in the evening. My friends I have lost a day." That is, Mr. Mather lost a day when he did not divide the connexion into two parts. 6. Mr. R—— declares Methodism is near to its "Ne plus ultra"—is likely to be broken into a thousand pieces.—&c. &c. In the conference Dr. Coke and Mr. Henry Moore, explained their matter respecting the eighteen guineas. J. Rogers' business was never examined—The peculation of the

the Kingswood money was considered. It suffered a loss of more than eighty pounds, in passing thro' two or three hands. It was alledged that the matter after it had been carefully examined, could not be brought to any bearing. When I declared in the conference I was "sufficiently satisfied on the subject," it was before I had proper time to examine it. When that meeting was ended, I found many of the preachers were not satisfied. They, together with several friends, brought forward circumstances, which placed the subject in a different light, in regard to the peculation of the Kingswood money. The following were their observations. 1. As two persons took down what was subscribed for that collection, and their accounts agreed, there could be no mistake on their side. 2. The persons that received the money examined what was brought from every circuit separately, and saw that the sum answered to the account, before they proceeded. 3. The accounts and the money are compared in the conference, and if there are mistakes, they are soon found out. 4. This money had not passed through many hands, before above eighty pounds were wanting. 5. In the conference, the names of the preachers whose hands it had passed through were not mentioned. When these things are properly weighed, is it possible for any man to be satisfied?

When I mentioned that this letter had fallen providentially into my hands, one of the old preachers declared, it was a devilish providence that brought it to me. And Mr. Bradburn told me, every thing that had been alledged against me was trifling, in comparison of the manner I had pursued to obtain this letter.

5. Article. They say, I have charged them with being "guilty of [criminal] secrecy in the transacting of their affairs." They quote the following words from the 16 page of my Trial, to prove this assertion.

"That there is secrecy in the disbursement of our collections is notorious. They are detailed this year more than formerly; but the minutes do not give a fair statement of our expenditure, as I shall endeavour to point out. 334. 19s. 6d. for sicknets, besides what the circuit allowance, appears to be an incredible sum. But the two following

“lowing sums are much beneath par. Removal of families, 176l. 2s.. Expence in travelling, 286l. 8s. 8d. If the book were fairly examined, where the monies are detailed, if I am not greatly mistaken, the two last sums would be near twice as much as those I have put down from the minutes. For we frequently heard the preachers who have the chief management of your affairs declare, the expences of travelling and removing families, would be a thousand pounds or more, for the last year. All our expenditure might be published in detail in four or five pages more than they now fill up. This would lead the people to examine their different circuits, and prevent them from reflecting upon us, as they do at the present. But while there is secrecy upon the *very face* of our minutes, no sensible friend can be thoroughly satisfied.”

When I called the attention of the preachers to the sums that are named for travelling expences and removal of families, as being considerably beneath what was expended, not one of them denied it. They never attempted to shew that the removal of families and travelling expences, did not amount to a thousand pounds, though both sums on the minutes are only 462l. 10s. 8d. They never attempted to prove that 464l. 19s. 6d. for sickness, besides what the circuits allow, is an incredible sum. If the conference would publish in detail, the different sums that have been paid in every conference since the death of Mr. Wesley, and let the stewards of the different circuits compare them with the sums they have advanced, then it would be known, how far “criminal” secrecy has been practised among us. Till that is done, the people cannot properly judge how their money has been expended. And I call upon the conference to do it at once, if they wish to satisfy their friends. The passage they have quoted, and my declaration in the conference, both agree, in showing that in my opinion, our expenditure has not been sufficiently detailed.

I would just ask here, do the people, or even the preachers know how much money the book room brings in? This year, there are more than 13000 sets of magazines printed, which upon a moderate calculation, will at least bring in 2000l. after paying all the expence attending them. But
do

do the people know what the book money is applied to? Did the different societies, or even the preachers ever know how much the London law-suit cost, when they had to pay the expences on both sides? Or have they ever been informed how this money was raised? If these affairs will bear the light, why are they not published? Is not the charge of secrecy [the word *criminal*, they have added: it is not mine.] in our money matters founded upon such facts as cannot be denied? Is not this evident to every impartial observer? Have I charged the preachers in this passage with any thing farther, than a want of publishing our expenditure in detail, that the different societies might be able to judge how far their collections are properly applied? On this head, had the conference a right unanimously to declare, "that Mr. Kilham is highly criminal in bringing so heavy and dreadful a charge against the body of preachers, and especially against the senior brethren?" Where is the "heavy and dreadful charge" found in what I have published? my charge respects secrecy in the disbursement of money. This I have made out beyond contradiction in this pamphlet. And am I "highly criminal" for asserting, what is self evident on this subject? Would nothing short of my expulsion atone for it?

4 General charge. "Mr. Kilham has published in his tracts, paragraphs highly derogatory to the character of Mr. Wesley."

When a cause requires an appeal to the *passions* of a people, instead of an appeal to their *understanding and conscience*, it will be hard to defend it. In the short letter which the conference circulated throughout England, after my expulsion, Mr. Wesley is brought in as suffering exceedingly in his reputation, from what I have written. Sensible persons see through the veil, and most of our friends, who allow themselves time to think on the subject, will refuse to be caught in this gilded snare.

Let us examine the passages they bring forward, on which their charge is founded.

1. Progress of Liberty, page 33. "While Mr. Wesley lived, he acted according to his own will, in receiving many to travel in our connexion. Many persons were brought

"brought from different circuits, by the influence of individuals, who would never have been recommended by the people, where they have frequently preached. The local preachers, the trustees, leader and stewards, were amazed and grieved, at their having *crept* among us, in such a *dark unfair way*."

2. Bull, page 4. "For a number of years, many of our most sensible and pious friends have complained of many evils which are found among us. They thought, after Mr. Wesley's death, we should immediately remove them."

3. Trial, page 9. "I offered to produce in the district meeting, if they would allow me time, a number of passages from Mr. Wesley's notes and sermons, (which are considered as the standard of Methodism) that are not consistent with the scriptures, and the doctrines we profess as a people to believe."

4. Trial, page 32. "It is an opinion with many, that the people ought to have been put in possession of their own principles at the death of Mr. Wesley."

5. Appeal, page 1. "When he (Mr. Wesley) was called to his reward, the preachers did not enter upon a particular examination of his plan, but took it up, and adopted his laws and rules, as he left them. It cannot be supposed that Mr. Wesley, who travelled about four thousand miles every year, and preached so very often, would closely attend to a well organized form of church government for his people after his decease. When individuals began to examine different parts of our plan, they found several things in it both *oppressive* and *unscriptural*."

The following remarks will place this subject in a proper light. 1. Mr. Wesley never professed himself to be infallible. He often declared, how frail and weak he was. 2. He often called upon the people that heard him, not to receive *even what he delivered*, without examining it by the word of God. 3. As he wrote his sermons and other things in haste, we cannot suppose that he could so strictly attend to every thing, as he would have done, had he had more time. If passages may be found in his notes, sermons, and

and other writings, which cannot be reconciled to the scriptures, this is what might be expected from a person in his situation, and what sensible readers will pass over without censuring his character. 4. He considered himself as the father of his people, and thought he had a right to make laws, and govern, as the head of our connexion. He said the people would submit to him, but they would not submit to any person or persons in the same way. 5. He was frequently imposed upon, by different persons, and was led to accept of men to travel in the connexion, which were a reproach to our cause. 6. In the latter part of his life, he employed a few persons, which were like a privy council to him: from the year 1784, when the deed of declaration was made, appointing 100 preachers to be the conference, to the time of his death, many rules and laws were made, which cannot with propriety be imputed to him. They were the laws and rules of the preachers that acted as a privy council. 7. The people in general, cheerfully submitted to government while he lived, but expected after his death, many alterations would take place in their favour. 8. Mr. Wesley never expected that the societies would submit to the preachers as they had done to him. What they with pleasure conformed to under his government, when it was claimed by the conference as their right, without the consent of the people, became of consequence, unscriptural and oppressive. 9. And for the present Methodist preachers to wish to have the same dominion over the different societies that Mr. Wesley had, without their consent, appears to me, exceedingly unjust. 10. I refer the reader to the 9, 10, 11, and 12 pages of the Progress of Liberty, for my account of Mr. Wesley's character. I intreated the conference to examine that account, and not take detached passages, to make me guilty of a crime, which my soul abhors. But they knew too well, if that account of Mr. Wesley were examined by our people, it would entirely defeat the end they had in view, in producing these detached passages, and calling them, when collected, a charge "highly injurious to our late venerable father in the gospel." According to my judgment, all things considered, even in the detached paragraphs they have quoted, I have not "said any

any thing derogatory to Mr. Wesley's character." And I cannot suppose myself "highly criminal," for what I have published of him.

5 Charge. "Mr. Kilham is guilty of indecent and slanderous language." Upon different parts of our economy, I have expressed myself with a good deal of warmth. Especially in exposing the *ever to be detested* rules of the preachers fund. Whoever examines that system of rules, which are replete with evil, and considers how a great part of the money is raised, which is appropriated to superannuated preachers and widows, according to the number of their years of travelling, and not according to their real wants, this will at least be some apology for my severity of expression on them. Especially, when my readers are informed, that, there are 6000*l.* in hand belonging to the fund. This is lent to defray the deficiencies of the yearly collection, &c.; but the preachers are determined to have it back, as soon as the book room or the yearly collection will refund it. It is considered as property belonging to the fund. But when several of the preachers are charged with it, they reply, they have no such sum, and quiet their minds in reflecting, that it is either lent to the contingent fund, or to the book room. One of the preachers told me this conference, that the sum belonging to that fund, according to what they had heard from their brethren that have the management of it, when all is paid in that belongs to it, is about 6000*l.* Whatever severe epithets I made use of in speaking upon the rules of this fund, or any thing else, I acknowledged they were not justifiable, confessed my sorrow for them, and asked the preachers pardon.

From the beginning of the trial, I protested against the court by which I was tried. At the same time I was ready to own, that according to its nature and tendency, the conference treated me with respect; and that my trial was as fair as such an *inquisitorial court* would admit of.

At 11 o'clock on the 27th of July, I was desired to retire, till the evidence was summed up against me. At five o'clock that evening I was requested to attend, that sentence might be passed. Mr. Taylor expressed a great deal of sorrow on account of the painful work he had to accomplish.

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After he had informed me what had passed, and delivered the sentence, the conference, on my requesting it, did not confirm what he had pronounced against me in their name till the next day. The following Appeal, which I published immediately after in London, will give the reader a idea of the steps which were taken the next day.

AN APPEAL

TO THE

METHODIST SOCIETIES

THROUGHOUT

GREAT BRITAIN.

DEAR BRETHREN,

"HAVING been tried in two district meetings this year, and no sentence passed in them against me, I was requested to attend the conference in London, that I might undergo a new examination, and have judgment inflicted. After appearing three days at the bar of the conference, my expulsion was fixed on yesterday in the afternoon. That every thing might be done on my part which the scriptures require, I sent the following letter to the preachers this morning, that they might seriously consider the particulars it contains. I have only altered a few words, to make it read better.

A. K.

To

To the President of the Methodist Conference.

DEAR SIR,

I hope you will be so kind as to read to the preachers the following lines:

When I was called to your bar on Monday morning, and received a number of questions in writing to answer, I exceedingly rejoiced; hoping that I should have a fair trial.—But, on my returning a written answer to those questions, on Tuesday morning, I soon perceived that a fair trial could not be obtained. You recollect I requested three things of you.—1. To give me a list of the charges which the committee of preachers had drawn up on Monday: 2. That I might be tried by a jury of the people: 3. That my trial might be open to the friends in the new chapel. The two last requests you spurned with warmth, and refused to grant me the former. It appeared *extremely* unreasonable to me to be called to your bar to answer charges, which I had no previous knowledge of, without having a single advocate among you to plead my cause; but, as this was *your will*, I was obliged to submit. After you had spent the whole of Tuesday in bringing charges against me, debating upon them, and taking down short notes of what passed upon each, I hoped you would have cheerfully given me a copy of the whole, when it was completed. Yesterday morning I entreated you to give me a copy of the particulars you had drawn up the day before, and to allow me a few hours retirement, that I might give you a written answer to them; but this equitable request you refused to comply with; and began immediately to read over the list a second time, that new observations might be made upon it. When you had finished the second reading, without giving me a copy of the improved list, you desired me to retire, that you might sum up the evidence and come to a conclusion. On that part of the trial *which most concerned me*, you would neither allow me to be present, nor to have an advocate in your assembly; but made every preacher stand up and pledge himself before God, neither to tell me, nor any other person without doors, what passed in the debates, till the restraint should in some future period be taken off.

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From eleven o'clock in the morning till five in the evening; you had this business entirely to yourselves; at that hour I was called like a criminal to your bar, not to bear your debates, and the evidence summed up, but to receive sentence of expulsion. When I heard you deliver the sentence, without allowing me to know what had passed in the debates, I could not help recollecting the exclamation I formerly published: "O, methodistical justice! to what region hast thou fled?" &c. It was with difficulty I prevailed on you to read over those charges which you grounded my expulsion upon; and, when you put off confirming the sentence till four o'clock this afternoon, you refused to give me a copy of the particulars you had collected, with your remarks and resolves upon them:—I pledged myself not to copy a line of them, but to return the whole exactly as I received them. I wanted them, that I might weigh each particular in my closet before God, and make every concession I possibly could on my appearance at your bar this afternoon; but you *determinately refused* to comply with my request.

As far as you have convinced me that I have erred, so far I have frankly owned my offence, and asked your pardon. Two things I have cheerfully acknowledged: 1. That in my warmth I have made use of several expressions which cannot be justified: 2. That a few of the accounts I have published, respecting the persons that receive from our funds, are not correct—I received them from very respectable persons, who in some particulars have been mistaken, and I promise to make equal concessions on any other part of the charges, would you only produce evidence of my having acted contrary to the gospel in them. God is my witness, I would a thousand times rather do it, than abide under the influence of any thing that is contrary to his will in this matter: but, as I cannot think it consistent with the religion of Jesus, to make a *feigned* confession of having offended, without conviction, therefore, should my life depend on it, I cannot go farther than I have proposed. Only produce evidence of my guilt on any of the charges I have not acknowledged, and, if you require it, I will publicly ask your pardon in the new chapel. If you will suffer your charges, after I have animadverted in writing upon them,

them, to be laid before a jury of the friends, that are now in London (you chusing one half of the number, and I the other,) their determination shall be final. — If you refuse this proposal, I have nothing farther to add upon the subject.

But I particularly request that you will inform me in writing, when I appear at your bar this afternoon, by what law of the *bible*—of *justice*—of the *nation*—or of *conscience*, you try and expel me? Do you expel me in the first place, for immorality? or, secondly, for preaching erroneous doctrines? or, thirdly, for want of abilities for the work I have engaged in? or, lastly, for want of diligence and faithfulness in the work? If these things are not the cause, tell me *honestly* when I appear before you.

There are two things which will follow my expulsion.

1. Irreparable injury to my character, throughout these nations. 2. Considerable loss to myself or family. I have subscribed eleven years to the preachers' fund; and, according to it's rules, whoever you *chuse* to expel loses the advantage of it. — Will you abide by the consequences of my expulsion? If I cannot have justice done by you, cannot I have it by putting my cause into the hands of those that have it in their power to see the injured righted? And, should you go to extremities, my character and property may both be secured by the laws of our land. I give you this information, that, you may sit down and count the cost, before you pronounce the final sentence.

I am sorry that you should so industriously labour to persuade the people where you go, that I cannot make good any of the charges I have brought against the persons alluded to. Some of the particulars you have selected from my pamphlets, and called charges, are no charges; others are only made such, by your *inferences*. If you will give me a copy of the particulars you have collected, I pledge myself to justify every thing I have asserted (except in those instances where I have made concessions and asked your pardon) to the satisfaction of every impartial reader. Only forbear the shouts of victory, till our people have a fair opportunity of examining both sides, and then let the event determine, whether you or I have the most cause to triumph.

If you will suffer my reply to be circulated by the magazine, or as publicly as your remarks will be, and the people at large consider you to be victorious, then make use of what declarations you please on the subject. To their bar let us mutually appeal. But till that is done, let me intreat you not to attempt to prepossess their minds in your favour, lest it should end contrary to your expectation.

Earnestly intreating the God of glory to direct your steps aright in this matter, I am,

Your affectionate servant,

ALEX. KILHAM.

Wood-street, 28th July, 1796.

At four o'clock, I appeared again at the bar of conference. I requested to know what answers they designed to return to the questions proposed, in the letter they received from me in the morning.—The president informed me it had been read, but that the brethren did not think it required any answer. They refused to inform me by what law I am tried, cast, condemned, and expelled: as also, whether, or not, I am excluded for immortality—erroneous doctrines—want of abilities—or want of diligence and faithfulness in the work. The president desired then to know, if I had any thing farther to mention on the subject. I told the conference that I had been this day for several hours in Zion chapel, where I had seen nearly as many ministers, of different denominations, assembled together, as there were preachers in that house, all uniting their influence to send missionaries to the South-sea islands. I had seen five ministers of different parties uniting with one accord, while they solemnly set apart near thirty missionaries for that great and arduous undertaking: but now it is probable I am come into the company of a greater number of preachers, professing the same religion, to see them expel one of their body, because he has ventured to tell them the truth. When I had finished, the president, after speaking a little, pronounced the sentence, in words to this effect: “You, Mr. Alex. Kilham, are judged to be unworthy of a place in this body; and, therefore, I now inform you, that you are no longer a member

a member of it, but are expelled from the connexion." After two of them had prayed, they offered to return what I had subscribed to the preachers' fund; but I informed them, that I should advise with my friends, before I received it; and, it was probable, I should apply some other way for it.

I have just seen a hand-bill now circulating, signed by the president and secretary of the conference, declaring, that I could not make good one of the charges I was called to substantiate; and, therefore, they have expelled me from the connexion. As none of the people were present at the trial, and the conference refused to let a jury examine the matter, every impartial inquirer after truth, will consider it his duty to suspend his judgment on this subject, till their account and mine are laid before the people. If I do not answer their declarations, when they are allowed to be seen, to the satisfaction of the candid and unprejudiced, I will bear the blame for ever."

The same day they lost no time, but had a short letter prepared to circulate through the nations, in case I did not make suitable acknowledgement of my offences, and engage to renounce what I had published. When I appeared at their bar and received the final sentence of expulsion, the preachers did it by their president with all the gloom and silence of an inquisition. To make my expulsion secure, it was not only confirmed by the preachers standing up and unanimously agreeing to it, but every person was required to sign a paper with his own hand, of the *justness* and *uprightness* of their proceedings in that matter. The paper was taken to the communion table, and laid on the place where the memorials of the body and blood of Christ are presented every sabbath day, and Mr. Bradburn, [I cannot relate the tragical story without weeping,] who had formerly professed himself a friend to liberty and the rights of the people, Mr. Bradburn, I say, stood by the rails of the Lords table; like the governor of an inquisition, to see that all his brethren signed. Here we find, about 150 preachers of the gospel of Christ, confirming the sentence of condemnation, in a way unheard of in the records of methodism, if not in the records of ecclesiastical history. This is a suf-

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fficient proof, that the leading men in that process, considered what I had written (to enlighten and save our people from many evils that they groan beneath) as worse than any crime that had ever been examined in any former conference.

The letter they had prepared was instantly circulated. That night it was sent off by post to many places. After attacking the passions of the people, by a new account of my having injured the character of Mr. Wesley, they complain of my behaving with levity before them. Perhaps this will not appear in such a detestable light, when my readers are informed of the cause of my smiling. Soon after my examination was entered upon, a dispute took place among the preachers to know, whether I was trying them or they were trying me. Many arguments were brought forward to prove that I was their judge and they were criminals before me. After a long dispute on the subject, a great majority of the conference determined the point, and solemnly declared, I was trying them. This was so curious, when I was arraigned and brought from Alnwick in Northumberland, on purpose to be tried by them, that I could not help smiling. I told several of the preachers, if I were trying them, they ought to let me sit in the presidents' chair. The dispute was resumed the next day. Dr. Coke could not be reconciled, to the idea of my trying them, when it was to be printed, and the people knew they had been trying me; therefore he altered the expression, and called the passages they had collected, charges against me. A dispute took place upon the subject, which continued for some time, and was settled on the following terms. They called part of the list charges which I had brought against them, and the other part charges which they had brought against me. But, what may appear singular to many, out of the three charges they brought against me, only one stands: that is, the charge of making use of a decent expression, which they have owned I acknowledged and sought their pardon for. They had charged me with *ignorance, impudence, and breach of trust*; and also *with lies*.—But these they wisely expunged from their list. Notwithstanding the second dispute on the subject, they have dropped the distinction in the account they have

have published. It seems they were conscious it would not hold good in the opinion of our people. Many things happened in the course of the trial, to keep me above melancholy. When I told the Preachers that I was as happy as a Prince at their bar, and had neither fear nor sorrow on account of what I had writren in general, this was considered as a *demonstrative proof* of my want of piety, and I was reproved sharply for it. I ever declared to them, through the whole of the trial, if they would convince me I had acted contrary to the scriptures, then I would own my offences with sorrow before them. But till that was done, I should not make myself unhappy in their presence. Would it be possible to refrain from smiling, when above 100 Preachers of the Gospel disputed so warmly with each other, to know whether I was trying them, or they were trying me? Are there not several things laughable in the charges they have brought against me? And was it not innocent to be chearful in their presence, when I was conscious of no considerable offence that they could lay to my charge? On the other hand was it not right to be chearful when I was conscious that the chief of my sufferings were occasioned by a *few persons*, who were angry with me, because I had exposed the corruptions of our connexion to view, and had pleaded for the rights of the people? I did rejoice then, and do still rejoice, that I am accounted worthy to suffer for the sake of Jesus, and in pleading the cause of his followers.

Every day during the conference, several of the Preachers urged me to acknowledge my offences, and to return to them with suitable penitence. But my constant answer was this. I will chearfully confess any thing you shall convince me is wrong: but I cannot play the hypocrite, and feign myself sorrowful, when I feel a contrary principle in my heart.

That nothing might be wanting on my part to meet the Preachers, as far as I could with a good conscience, I wrote them the following letter.

To Mr. Thomas Taylor, President of the Conference.

Dear Sir,

London, 5th. August, 1796.

You will greatly oblige me, by reading the following lines to the Preachers, and returning me their answer, as soon as it is convenient.

Ever

Ever since I came out to travel, I never had the least desire to leave the connexion, but wished to spend and be spent, in the work of the ministry. The circuits where I have travelled can bear witness, that I have not only endeavoured to preach according to the regular plan, but to publish the good tidings of salvation, in many new places.

When I heard that my pamphlets had given great offence to many of the Preachers, and that my expulsion was deemed necessary on that account, many can testify, that I always declared, should that be the case, I had no intention of attempting to head a party, or joining immediately, any community of Dissenters. It has been my fixed opinion for several months, and continues the same this moment, that the Preachers will in due time be convinced, that I am neither a secret nor an open enemy to the cause of methodism. If I have acted contrary to the views of many, it has been from *conviction of the importance of the steps which I have taken*. And if I have erred, it has been with a *design* to serve the connexion at large. I have weighed all the charges brought against me with the greatest attention; and lest my own heart should deceive me, I have asked counsel of several very respectable friends: but after all, I cannot, without sacrificing my own principles, make any other acknowledgements than I have already made to you in the conference, and in writing. If I had different views, you may depend on it, I would cheerfully submit to their influence. It is probable, before another conference return, our views on these subjects may be the same. We may then unite with thankfulness, to build the temple of the Lord together.

You alledge nothing against my moral character; yet you have cast me off, after allowing me one day to consider upon the subject.

My dear Wife cheerfully sold her furniture, and parted with her house and friends, to be my companion in the work of the Lord. She has received no quarterage, the eight years we have been married. Every person acquainted with her, knows her value, and the care she has taken to make Methodism respectable, by her particular attention to domestic affairs. The day before we parted, by a fall from

from a horse, she strained her foot, and has been incapable of walking ever since. Her confinement, together with her exercises of mind, have brought a return of her nervous disorder, which at present threatens her life. And yet you have not only cast me off, but her also. In her present afflicted state, she has not a place provided by you, where to lay her head. Nor have you made me an offer of any help, (except returning the money I have subscribed to the fund) till I can get into a situation to provide for my family, though I have been attempting to serve the connexion with all my heart, in near twelve of the best years of my life. Does not common justice require that you should make some provision for me, till I can get into a place where my wants may be supplied? For, though my dear wife has a small fortune, yet she has an infirm mother to help, and it will be impossible to avoid having recourse to the principal in her present distress except help be administered from some quarter. At present we are quite unfixed about our future abode. The Lord can direct our steps, where we shall have our wants amply supplied.

But what I principally desire you to consider is this. If it were possible, I could wish to preach as much this year, as I have done in any former. But it is probable, this cannot be allowed. I should, however, wish to spend every Sabbath, in publishing the Gospel of the grace of God.—I am determined still to consider myself a Methodist Preacher, and am resolved by the grace of God, for this year, to shew to the connexion at large, that I have still the interests of Metho-

* On meeting the committee of preachers, I begged to know, if they designed to afford me any help, till I could meet with a suitable situation. They informed me my case should be considered in the conference: but when Mr. Suter returned the money I had subscribed toward the fund, he said the conference would not allow me any thing extra. Without alledging any thing against my moral character—without giving me time to provide for myself and family—they have not only expelled me from the connexion, but cast me off without a farthing, or allowing me to have a right to the benefits of the fund, though I have subscribed so many years to it: and now that it is worth 6000*l*. To the God of Justice I commend my cause, not in the least doubting but he will engage in my behalf, and grant me the desire of my heart.

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disin at heart. In consequence of this (unless something very particular happen to alter my purpose) I shall join no sect or party of dissenters, but consider myself the friend of all.—Do you my dear brethren, by expelling me from among yourselves, exclude me also from having a place among the local preachers? If this be the case, do you also expel me from the society? Or do you admit me to be a member of your community, and a local preacher? I shall wait your answer to this letter with a degree of anxiety, as a great deal depends on it to me and my family.

Praying that God may direct you in all things,

I remain, your affectionate servant,

ALEX. KILHAM.

P. S. As you have printed your Account of the Trial several days since, I particularly request you to favour me with a copy of it. This request you might have granted as soon as it was printed, had you considered, that you refused to give me a copy of the particulars of the Trial on the day of my expulsion, under the idea that I should soon see them in print.

The next day I received the following short letter.

Mr. Kilham. Sir,

London, August 8. 1796.

I am ordered by the Conference to inform you, that, your letter was read this afternoon, in a full meeting. We are concerned that you, wife, or yourself should suffer any thing, especially, as we consider your sufferings as the effect of your imprudence.

If you wished your letter to be understood as an acknowledgement of your fault, and as a step toward any further explanation, a few of the Preachers shall be authorized to meet and converse with you.

I am, Sir, On behalf of the Conference,

Your's

S. BRADBURN.

Instead of this being any answer to my letter, it evades entering upon any particulars in it. From the beginning I have offered to acknowledge any fault they could prove me guilty of. But no person can justly imagine, that I meant the letter referred to, as a confession of any thing further than is declared in it. That my mind might be fully known to the conference, I sent them the following letter, a few hours after I had received theirs.

To Mr. Taylor, President of the Conference.

DEAR SIR,

London, Aug. 6, 1796.

I have just received Mr. Bradburn's letter, written in behalf of the conference, and intreat you to read to the preachers the following lines.

As far as I am convinced of erring, so far I am willing to own my offence. God is my witness I would sacrifice every thing that the Lord Jesus requires, to give you the right hand of fellowship.—I will not take up much of your time in giving my sentiments freely on the subject.

According to my views, our people are prevented from having a suitable share in our government. I wrote the Progress of Liberty to attack what I thought wrong in our system as it referred to rules and laws of discipline. I cannot, after mature deliberation, suppose, that what I have published injures the character of Mr. Wesley—the characters of the preachers in general, or of any respectable individuals. On the contrary, I think I have treated Mr. Wesley's memory with respect; and have shown that a majority of the conference *abhor* the evils complained of. But if the preachers *in general* suppose themselves injured by what I have published, I am sorry for it, and solemnly declare, it was never my intention to injure any of them. If any of our friends or others have drawn wrong inferences from what I have written, and are led to brand the preachers *in general*, as a set of designing wicked men, *I detest their inferences*, and declare, nothing could be more foreign to my design. If you add to what I have now named, the acknowledgement I have made of unjustifiable expressions, in some parts of my pamphlets, I think you cannot justly suppose, I had any thoughts of injuring the characters of the preachers.

If this acknowledgement be sufficient to satisfy the conference, I will engage to conform to the rules of our body in every thing, as far as I am convinced they are *agreeable* to the scriptures of truth. If you admit me again to my place in the connexion, I suppose the preachers will have no objection to my conforming to general custom, in the following particulars.

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1. If I have members to receive or exclude, to or from the society, I shall beg leave never to do it, without the concurrence of the leaders. 2. Neither to appoint nor change leaders or stewards, but as it is mutually agreed upon in the leaders meeting. 3. Not to give plans to any local preachers, till their case be considered in the leaders' and quarterly meeting. 4. That no persons shall be proposed to travel by me, but such as are approved by a majority of the brethren, in leaders and quarterly meetings. 5. That I have the privilege of making no collections but what are mutually agreed upon, with the leaders, &c. And that I be allowed to take notes of what I receive in any place, where the people may suspect my integrity.

If what I have now said be satisfactory, I shall be thankful (with or without a friend) at any hour most convenient for you this afternoon, to meet a committee of the preachers.

I am, your affectionate servant,

A. KILHAM.

As I heard nothing from them on Saturday, I wrote the following note on Sunday evening.

To Mr. Taylor, President of the Conference.

DEAR SIR,

London 7th Aug. 1796.

If the conference think it unnecessary to answer the letter which I wrote yesterday, I shall be glad to have an answer to that which you received on Friday, as soon as possible.

I am a good deal surprized, that you should continue to withhold from me, a copy of the particulars of my trial, as they were drawn up at the time of my expulsion. I again intreat, that I may have an exact copy of them without delay. Your keeping them from me, cannot in the end answer any good purpose.

Please to read this note to the preachers when you meet in the morning.

I am, your affectionate servant,

A. KILHAM.

On

On the 8th in the evening, Messrs. Mather, Thompson, Thos. Taylor, Pawson, Benson, Bradford, Bradburn, and Moore, were appointed by the conference to meet me. When I requested to know, whether I was to attend the committee alone, or with a friend, Mr. Mather answered, alone. After prayer the committee informed me, that the conference was determined strictly to adhere to the rules of pacification. No person should be allowed to violate any of them, without being called immediately to answer for his conduct. 2. They informed me, that as individuals, they disapproved of many things in those rules, as much as I could do. Yet notwithstanding their private judgment was so averse to many things in them, they submitted to them *as rules of pacification*. 3. They gave me to understand, if I came back I should not be an assistant preacher this year: a natural consequence of which would be, those rules could not have so much influence upon me, as upon assistants. 4. They then wished to know, if I would bind myself to submit to them according to the literal, grammatical, and every sense of them. Mr. Moore hinted, I could not do this, without recanting what I had written against them. I told the committee I should never recant what I had written, because my opinion was the same respecting them. I engaged to conform to them, as far as I believed they were according to the scriptures, but this would not satisfy. 5. They also required, if I submitted, that I should not speak against those rules, if I heard any person talking ever so absurdly upon them. Nor was I to write against them *even to a friend in private*, if he advanced any thing contrary to my sentiments upon them. I told the committee at once, it was in vain to attempt to bind me to such an *object submission*. I should never agree to it on any account whatever. 6. Mr. Bradburn then said, as submission to the rules of pacification was the least of many things which they had to propose to me, it was unnecessary to proceed. 7. I told them it appeared very singular, that they should wish to bind me to those rules without any condition, when they acknowledged, that they did not approve of them in their own judgment: especially as they hinted that they were to be fixed and established forever. Several of them begged I

would be cautious what I published on this head. Messrs. Mather and Bradburn explained, but they brought the subject to the same point. That is, that in their private judgment they did not by any means approve of many of those rules, yet they submitted to them, and were determined neither to speak nor act against them. And as it was not likely the people would ever be agreed upon them, they consented to be subject to them as long as they lived. Mr. Henry Moore, to extricate himself from an appearance of duplicity on this head, declared, he believed them to be exactly according to the scriptures, and submitted to them on that account, with all his heart. 8. Two of the committee prayed: we shook hands and parted, wishing each other well.

Before we left the room, I again intreated them to give me a copy of the trial, but they would not acknowledge that they had seen it, or knew any thing when it would come out. In less than an hour after however, I went and got one from Mr. Whitfield, who was publicly selling them in the book room.

I shall make a few remarks, and then conclude.

1. The preachers throughout the trial, carefully avoided attacking my principles. Though they threw out many hints of the absurdity of many things contained in the outlines of a constitution, yet they never attempted to confute them. Some of the preachers have declared, that many of the regulations we recommended, are adopted, as we shall see to our comfort, when the minutes are published.

2. If every thing I have been tried about had been found false, this would not have invalidated what has been advanced, upon the necessity of a better constitution being established among us.

I am sorry that I should have been compelled to enter so largely upon a justification of my conduct in this pamphlet. Because, while our observations prove, that on the present system, abuses may be given place to every day, and the party offending be able, either to conceal his conduct from the notice of the people, or have recourse to means which will prevent a fair trial, this proves the necessity of a better plan. And had there been no instances of any preachers abusing

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abusing our present rules, this would not have invalidated what we have advanced on the subject. The reader should *particularly observe*, that while a plan exists, which may be abused by a number of persons in a variety of instances every year, and those that are the most guilty, have the art of concealing their conduct in many instances from the notice of the people, this is sufficient of itself to prove, that a reform is wanting among us. In my trial, the preachers never attempted to prove that our present plan does not admit of the abuses I have published. Instead of the conference attempting to prove that our present rules are good, and admit of no abuses, they entered into a minute examination of the facts I produced; and strove to invalidate them. This put me in mind of our Lord's words—Where he speaks of tithing mint, annise, and cummin, and neglecting the weightier matters of the law. The weightier matters of our connexion at the time of my trial, were the rules that admit of abuses: of abuses that may escape the notice of the most vigilant observer: especially in money matters. These ought to have been carefully examined and altered. The lesser matters were, examining trivial circumstances in the evidence which I produced, and endeavouring to magnify them into crimes against me. If these ought to have been noticed, surely the other ought not to have been overlooked. If I had not, however, made good the facts which were produced to prove that our system is imperfect, many would have been led from the object of dispute, and have been imposed upon by arguments drawn from my silence on this head.

But, in my judgment, every thing that is worthy of the name of a charge, in the account the conference has published, is substantiated in these pages, beyond the possibility of confutation. If what I have advanced is not a sufficient proof to every class of readers, let them only converse freely with Trustees, Leaders, and the Stewards of our circuits and societies, as well as with many private members, and they will hear their testimony on this head. Let them ask these brethren, Have you ever known, members received to or expelled from the society, without the knowledge or consent of the people? Do you recollect any Leaders, Stewards,

or Local Preachers, that have been appointed to, or removed from their office by the Preachers alone? Are there any local, not to say travelling Preachers, that you are acquainted with, who have not abilities for their work? Did you ever know any person taken to travel without the people being consulted, who would have been opposed on every hand, had they known? Has an assistant Preacher power to make collections, and be accountable to no person, till he come to the conference? If he be not an honest man, has he any opportunity of giving in only part of what he has received without any person being able to detect him? Have you known any instances of persons receiving from the conference and from the circuits such sums as would be considered a species of swindling, were they examined? Or do you suppose, if the conference books, where all the monies are detailed, were to be compared with the circuit books, very many instances of this nature would appear? Have you ever seen anything like swindling in the change of horses, &c? Do you think there are any long unnecessary removes of families; or that public money is wasted in any respect? &c. &c.—Propose these questions in large towns, and you will meet with answers that will strongly corroborate what I have written on the subject. I could publish many things to confirm what is advanced in my defence in these pages, but I choose at present, rather to lay before the people what I brought forward to the conference, that they may judge, how far the Preachers had a right to publish through these nations, that I could not “substantiate one charge which I had brought against him.”

3. Every impartial reader will be convinced, that had my cause been as bad as the Preachers have represented it to be, it would have been their wisdom to have tried me by a jury or the people, before the society; and then, had I been found guilty, they would have been blameless. But several of the Preachers say, they could not do this without making a new law. I think it will be easy to prove, according to the testimony of the conference, that the greatest part of my trial was conducted either without law, or by a new one. In former conferences, those that were accused were tried for something immoral; for charges brought directly against them

them. But in the late conference, after the brethren had debated near an hour, it was determined that I was trying them. Now I ask have we either law or precedent, since the existence of methodism to countenance this new process? If we have not, then the greatest part of the trial was without law, as no new law has been enacted on the occasion. An open trial by Jury would have been as much according to the present existing rules of the connexion, as my trial was. By obstinately refusing an honourable trial many suspicions are raised; and had I been ever so guilty, our sensible friends cannot be reconciled to such a process. Every man that values the privilege of an Englishman, must be dissatisfied with such a trial.

4. It is easy to discern the cause of my condemnation. What I have written, with the Newcastle address &c. discovered many evils in our connexion, as it refers to the rules of discipline and the power of the Preachers. It is the cause of the people I have been pleading; and on that account I am expelled. The leading Preachers were conscious, if I were continued, many large societies would consider it as the effect of fear; and therefore, they resolved to use their power in calling me off, that others might stand in awe.

5. Many things I am called to endure in this season of persecution. While we were in London, some of the Preachers gave it out that I was deranged; and therefore, my conduct might be attributed to insanity. Since the conference, one of them in a large town, hinted in a leaders meeting, that I was subject to lunacy. The Jews said of the Lord Jesus. "He is mad and hath a devil, why hear ye him?" The servant is not above his Lord. Many things equally false, have been circulated through the nation. The scribes and pharisees took the same method to ruin the character of our blessed Redeemer. A few of the preachers who had acted from principle, and endeavoured to help in redressing grievances, have been censured and reproved by their brethren that manage our affairs. I was a good deal surprized to find many preachers neutral in the conference, and joining my accusers in my condemnation. Were I to publish extracts of their letters with their names, their conduct

dust would appear unfavourable. The fear of man brought a snare to many of them. Others were persuaded to believe, if the regulations we plead for were adopted, they would be brought into a pitiful state. I have no doubt, but when they think seriously on the subject, they will be of a different mind; and will be grieved at their having risen up in my condemnation.

Several preachers have declared, I had some base selfish end in view, when I wrote the Progress of Liberty. Had I left the connexion, and then published that pamphlet, there would have been room for suspicion. But being in an advantageous situation, and hazarding my all at the stake, without making the least provision for myself and family, in case I should be expelled; refusing several good offers that have been made me, and determining to wait this year to see what the preachers and people will do, are at least presumptive proofs, not only that no base motive influenced my conduct in this matter, but of my sincere love to the connexion.

6. There is a strange cry gone forth, that were the grievances redressed we complain of, and our people admitted to a share in the government, our affairs would be thrown into the hands of a few rich trustees, leaders, stewards, and private friends. They would regulate our doctrine and discipline; and the preachers would be their slaves. Is there any argument in declarations of this nature? Does the plan we suggest naturally lead to this? We think it would have a contrary influence. It would give every person a proper place in the society; and mutual love, and mutual confidence would crown the whole.

I would seriously ask, is not our connexion *now* in a great measure governed by preachers that are rich when compared with most of their brethren? Out of the ten or twelve, that chiefly manage our affairs, is there not a majority, that are men of fortune, by marriage, &c.? Do not these men fix themselves every year in the richest circuits in England, where their income, all things considered, is near double what many preachers have in small poor circuits, where they are but little at home? Considering their fortunes, and their advantageous circuits, there is as much difference between
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their circumstances, and those of their brethren in other places, as there is between many rectors and poor curates. The people see this and are astonished. Many of the preachers, deeply serious, grieve on account of it. I am not surprized that this select few should cry out so horribly against me. They are conscious, were the plan we plead for established, they could not enjoy all the privileges they at present possess. But it appears amazingly strange, that those preachers that groan beneath this inequality, should join these men seeking my expulsion, while they submit to let their own rights be invaded every year. God forbid that I should throw out any hint here to the disadvantage of any worthy character.—At the same time, God forbid that I should be afraid of crying out against the steps of any, who, to the disadvantage of their brethren, monopolize the best circuits, and exercise undue power over a number of the preachers, and the people.

7. To keep all things secure, the leading men in our connexion have established a law, that no preacher shall print or circulate any thing among our people, but what is examined and approved of by the book committee. This committee has several of the leading preachers in it; and therefore there is no probability of any thing being circulated, that is calculated to invade *their* rights. Many preachers cry out, our people in general are so ignorant, that they cannot understand these subjects. It would hurt their souls to consider them. They ought to be kept from their notice as much as possible, &c. Is it to our honour and their reproach, if they are ignorant of what concerns their welfare as a body? Ought they not to know how their own affairs are conducted? Would it hurt their souls to become acquainted with the things that are essentially connected with methodism? Is it not amazingly astonishing, that a law should pass in the Methodist conference in this enlightened age, to cramp the liberty of the press, and to keep our people from free inquiry? Is not that cause in a pitiful state that requires such means to support it? Is it not very surprizing, that many of the preachers, who have formerly declared themselves advocates for religious liberty, should bow their necks to such a yoke? Would it not have been more to the honour of
their

their characters to have ventured their all at the stake, than to have submitted to such a rule? If they had met with my fate, would not their minds have been more happy, than they are now in submitting to such pitiful arts of *human policy*, and *priestly* uniformity?

8. We ought by no means to think it strange that many of the preachers and others, should violently oppose a reformation among us. History informs us, that persecution has always been the lot of those who sought to redress grievances, either in church or state. If the people are resolved on obtaining their just rights, opposition and commotion will run high against them from those, who wish to retain undue power and influence. It is a happy circumstance for our people, that the deed of declaration is good for nothing; and that all the houses fixed on the conference plan are absolutely in the hands of their respective trustees. Nothing can make us a distinct people in the eye of the law, but an act of parliament. In consequence of this, the preachers have no power over any house but by the sufferance of the trustees. Let us be thankful to God for this unspeakable mercy. Whilst we strive lawfully to obtain our just rights; let us never forget the one thing needful. But let us by fervant earnest prayer, in the diligent use of the ordinances of God, seek holiness and conformity to him; then even in this conflict, we shall march on in our way to eternal happiness. While we remember, that if we faint in the day of adversity, our strength is but small; let us bear in mind, that we shall reap in due time, if we faint not.

9. As the conference returned me no answer to that part of one of my letters, which requested to know whether or not they expelled me from the local preachers and society, as well as from their body, I intend to preach this year, where there is an open door.

In concluding, I first commend my cause to the living God, not doubting of his willingness to direct my steps, and to help to the end. I also cheerfully recommend my case to the people belonging to the methodist connexion. If our societies and congregations, after fully investigating this matter, conclude, that my expulsion is according to the word of God, I shall submit: and if spared till another conference

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ference is pass'd, shall then seek a suitable situation for my family. But if they conclude, I have been unjustly expelled for pleading their cause, and take such steps (together with the preachers that will then be desirous of my return) for my restoration, as the nature of the subject requires, I have no doubt but God will direct their way, and all will end in his glory, and in the future prosperity of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

Nottingham, 23 Aug. 1796.

N. B. I have just seen the minutes of the conference, in which it is asked, who have desisted from travelling this year? — A. Kilham. Querie: Ought they not to have added, because he could not help it, on account of his being expelled? — For an answer to what they have said in 31st. page of the minutes, I refer the reader to the 45 & 46 pages of this pamphlet. — Several things, in due time, will be candidly examined which are found in them. I would only just observe here, that by detailing the yearly collection, according to the subscriptions of the different circuits, they have made it 956l. 15s. 2d. more than it was last year. This is a great mystery, when it is known that many circuits gave less this year than formerly. Why are not the other collections detailed in the same way? If no Preacher be to come out to travel without being *mentioned* in the quarterly meeting, may he not be *mentioned* there, without any benefit being obtained by it, as the Preachers will have power in the district meeting and in the conference to counteract any thing that quarterly meetings propose? The conference this year has set aside the decisions of district meetings in several instances, and will they always agree to what quarterly meetings *mention*? — Ought that part of the rules for the Preachers' fund to be over-looked, which appoints a Preacher's widow to be on *half pay allowance*, if she marry again; but if her second husband die, she is to come into *full pay again*!!! Many things else will require serious investigation.

FINIS.

The Reader will be kind enough to correct the following
(or any other) mistakes—Which were principally occasioned
by extraordinary haste.

- 3 page, 11 line, after first stood——add up.
24 ——— 7 — for indemnify me——read indemnify him.
24 ——— 20 — for spuch—— read such.
27 ——— 23 — for 464l.——read 334l.
29 ——— 20 — for principles——read privileges.
30 ——— 18 — after submitted to——add his.

5 AU 63

PROPOSALS FOR PRINTING BY SUBSCRIPTION

IN NUMBERS,

THE METHODIST MONITOR.

By ALEX. KILHAM, Minister of the Gospel.

CONDITIONS.

1. **T**HIS work will contain an abridgement of Trueman and Freeman's letter—the minutes of the Aberdeen district meeting—Progress of Liberty—Candid examination of the London Methodistical Bull, &c. As also abridgements and extracts from Mr. Longridge's Conciliatory Essay, and many other pamphlets and printed letters.—A great number of original pieces will appear in it, highly interesting to the connexion. With extracts from various addresses to the conference, which have been sent from several places, since the death of Mr. Wesley.

2. Every thing will be carefully avoided, as much as possible, that has a tendency to irritate or inflame. And nothing will be allowed to circulate in this work, but what is calculated to be of service to the different societies.

3. Every number will contain 42 full charged duodecimo pages, good paper, and a good type.—The whole will be comprized, if possible, in 16, and not exceeding 20 numbers, 3 pence each, to be paid at the time of delivery. It is requested that no persons will subscribe, but those, who mean to continue till the work is completed.

4. The first number will be published about the middle of October, and the rest will come out three weeks after each other. Subscribers are requested to give in their names as soon as possible. Subscriptions will be taken in by Mr. Murgatroyd, Chiswell-street, London; Mr. Edwards, Broad street, Bristol; Mr. Peat, Temple-street, Birmingham; Mr. Sutton, Bridle-Smith-gate, Nottingham; and by the persons that dispose of this Trial, and others, in Plymouth-Dock, Bath, Chester, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, &c. &c. &c.

TO

METHODIST CONNECTION IN GENERAL:

AND TO THE

PREACHERS, TRUSTEES, LEADERS,

AND

STEWARDS, IN PARTICULAR.

PERSONS of every denomination ought to know the affairs of their own church. The Methodists have been reproached repeatedly, for not attending to the different parts of their constitution, and examining them by the Word of God. May the time pass suffice, wherein we have given occasion for reflections on our conduct upon this head.

By the desire of very respectable persons in many large parties, I have undertaken this work. I expect the help of several serious sensible friends, in different parts of the connexion. They will provide a rich variety of matter. My province will be to arrange and prepare it for the Press. I intreat the help of traveling and local Preachers—of Trustees, Leaders, Stewards, and private Members of the society. And shall thankfully receive the sentiments of persons of every denomination, upon the subjects which this work will be confined to.

The advantages of a Publication of this nature, to a respectable body of people, cannot be estimated. It will open a free circulation of sentiments between the societies, and under the influence of the blessing of God, be of service to thousands of myriads.

Letters post paid, directed to me at Sunderland, Durham, will be thankfully received, and duly noticed.

A. KILHAM.

N. B In any place where the Trials are wanted, apply to Mr. Sutton, Bookseller, Nottingham.